

# BURNT ISLAND LIVING LIGHTHOUSE

Maine Department of Marine Resources

## Dedication Ceremony

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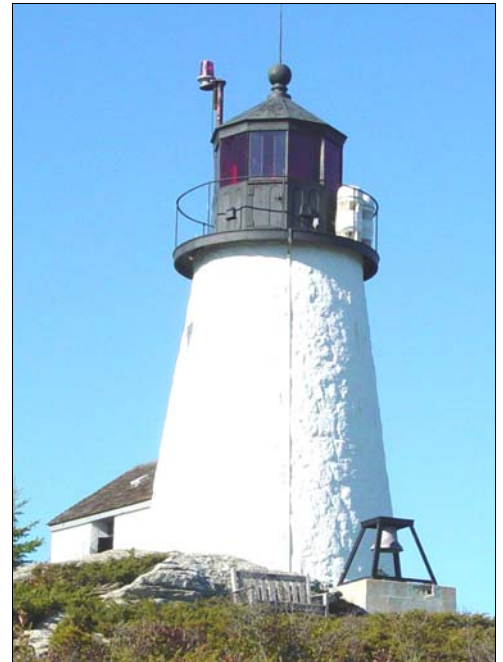
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On June 20, 2003, the official opening of the Burnt Island Living Lighthouse program took place with a grand ceremony. Over 300 guests attended the event in order to celebrate the completion of an extensive restoration project and the beginning of a new educational program.

The Sea Cadets from Portland set a strong patriotic tone by serving as the color guard, while Michael Wood sang the National Anthem and *America the Beautiful*.

Commissioner George Lapointe welcomed the guests to Burnt Island on that beautiful sunny day. He recognized the partnerships and collaborative efforts that produced the department's new educational facility, and thanked Education Director Elaine Jones for her dedication to the project. Lapointe referred to Burnt Island as the agency's new "Guiding Star" before introducing Governor John E. Baldacci. (continued page 2)



**The Burnt Island Light Station takes on a new life as it continues to guide mariners safely into Boothbay Harbor, Maine.**

### VOLUNTEERS

#### WANTED

Can you spare one day a week during the summer of 2004?

We need park rangers, interpreters, grounds crew, and support staff.

## "THE CHALLENGE" A Barn Raising—Please HELP!

The Department of Marine Resources is proud to offer a unique and exciting educational opportunity for Maine's children. Participants in our programs experience the most effective approach to learning: first-hand observation and exploration in the field. The "real world" is the best setting for education and Burnt Island is the ideal place.

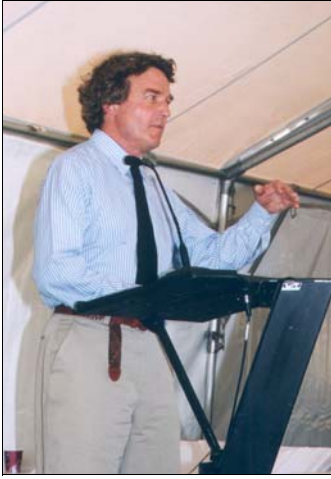
However, the key piece that will bring this incredible project to fruition is the construction of an Education Center, in the form of a barn. The Center will increase our public service capabilities by providing a class-

room space, overnight accommodations for school children, rest room facilities, and more. The cold, wet, conditions of spring and fall have proven to be our major obstacle, thus the need for appropriate shelter for program participants. The Center will also serve as an orientation site for all summer visitors, and a classroom space for teachers enrolled in educational workshops, seminars, and courses.

By March 31, 2004, we must meet a Challenge Grant offered by the MBNA Foundation. (continued page 8)

## Ceremony

Continued from page 1



**Artist Jamie Wyeth is the keynote speaker.**



*"Elaine Jones is really the Abby Burgess of our time."  
Jamie Wyeth*



**As a gesture of thanks, Commissioner George Lapointe presents Elaine Jones with roses.**

The Governor praised the efforts of the department's Education Division and all of the volunteers who had pulled together to accomplish the job. He said, "Today is truly a great day for the State of Maine. This Burnt Island Living Lighthouse program will serve as an outstanding educational facility. It's going to offer educational opportunities for Maine students who need and desire firsthand observation and exploration in the field. It will be an educational resource second-to-none, and a resource for teachers providing both a place for workshops and seminars."

Artist Jamie Wyeth, resident of the Tenant's Harbor Light and supporter of the Burnt Island project, was the honored keynote speaker at the Dedication Ceremony. In his address, he read excerpts from the journal of lighthouse heroine Abby Burgess that identified her passion, sense of responsibility, and determination. He then drew an analogy between her and Elaine Jones by saying, "Elaine Jones is really the Abby Burgess of our time. Her steadfast belief, conviction, and love of lighthouses is identical to Abby's Matinicus beacon. The Burnt Island beacon will illuminate many people and many children's lives by exposing them to lighthouse history."

Unable to attend the ceremony, Senators Snowe and Collins, and Representative Tom Allen, sent spokespersons in their place. Guest speakers were; Representative Ken Honey, who expressed his appreciation for having Burnt Island in the Boothbay region; Commander Susan Daignault of the United States Coast Guard, who remarked on the incredible improvements to the property since its transfer; Peter Ralston of the Island Institute who, called Burnt Island one of the "crowning jewels" of the Maine Lights Program; Libby Hopkins of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, who praised the DMR for its superb education program; and teacher Susan O'Brien and student Andrea Brooks, who expressed the importance of outdoor education and thanked the DMR for its commitment to the children of Maine. (see Andrea's speech on page 3)

Linda Mercer, the Director of the Bureau of Resource Management, and Elaine Jones recognized those who had contributed to the

success of the project and presented them with certificates of appreciation:

- Former DMR Deputy Commissioner Penn Estabrook for his support.
- Adele, Prudy, and Ann, the children of Keeper Joseph Muise, for their stories, photographs, and furnishings (see article page 4).
- Steve, Nancy, and Kirk McCullough, the children of Keeper James McCullough, for their physical assistance in the restoration efforts.
- Members of the U.S. Coast Guard: Harry Duval, Capt. Blaine Horrocks (ret.), BMCS Thomas Dunton, CWO Richard Cleary, CWO David Waldrip, and CWO Kenneth Black (ret.) for their guidance and assistance in acquiring historic documents, photographs, and lenses for display.
- Local heroes Rusty Court, Susan Clough, Bruce Wood, and Hal Marden for providing advice, research, and on-site assistance.
- Jean and Bob McKay for their devotion to the project and its graphic art needs.
- DMR personnel Bert Bilodeau, Steve Gaudette and Major John Fetterman for going above and beyond to make things happen.
- Master Gardeners Diantha Robinson, Susi Hamblen, Jane Roundy, Stephanie Stephenson, Jerry Litzerman, Linda Farrell, and Sam and Maureen Harris for the beautiful gardens and groomed grounds.
- The organizations of Landmark Volunteers, Americorps, and Conservation Corps for developing the island's trails and assisting in the restoration efforts.
- Elaine's family: husband Jeremy; children Tamara, Gregory and Benjamin; and mother Irene Patry for their support, encouragement, and physical labor.
- The following donors were recognized: The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, Historic Preservation Commission, Bureau of General Services, Burnt Island Lighthouse Society, Paul Gagne Family, MBNA Foundation, George McEvoy, Marylouise Cowan, and the Spruce Point Inn for donating the refreshments.
- MCPO Keith Jensen introduced the six former Burnt Island Keepers who were in attendance: James Buotte (1955-58), Dana Hale (1962-63), Thomas Norton (1968-1971), Jerry Marlowe (1973-74), Randall Griffing (1974-1977), and John Appleby (1977-79).

## A Student Shares Her Experience on Burnt Island

On a tiny island off the coast of Boothbay Harbor, our fifth grade class recently had a grand adventure. Our adventure included: the challenges of tenting out, learning new skills and information, experiencing outdoor learning, and meeting new people.

Our exciting trip began when our fifth grade class loaded onto a boat called *Ms. Boothbay*, and traveled south towards Burnt Island. The Captain circled the island once so we would all get a view of things to come. The first thing I remember seeing was a beautiful lighthouse setting high up on the rocks, trees covering most of the island, and white waves coming in and out.

Once all the gear was unloaded, the class worked together to carry it to the tent sites. This was my first experience camping out! I learned how to pitch a tent, that if you don't use a ground cloth you'll have a soggy sleeping bag, put your feet downhill so you won't roll at night, and you'd better keep your tent neat because you never know when Mrs. Jones might do a tent inspection.

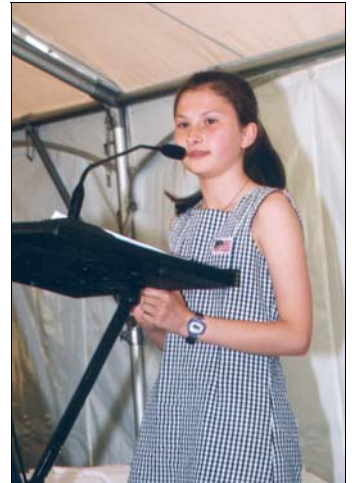
The three days on the island were filled with learning, and we didn't even use books! The first day, we started out playing Island Bingo. This neat game got us out exploring the island looking for creatures like osprey, mink, beach fleas, and pill bugs. I also never knew that sand could be so interesting. When looking through a microscope, we discovered Burnt Island sand is actually made up of tiny pieces of rock, dead sea animals, and magnetic rock. We went jelly fishing off the dock and found out how rare it is to find them because they only come to the surface during a certain time. When I carefully touched one, it felt like jelly! Sport fishing on the dock was also fun, even though we didn't catch anything. I think we would all be okay if anyone in the class ever got lost. We had a great unit on survival. Not only did we learn about signaling for help, we also made a jacket out of a trash bag. In small groups, we worked together and constructed survival shelters out of things found in the woods and on the beach. Using charts and compasses were interesting, but the best part was finding a hidden treat on the treasure hunt in the dark at night.

One special thing we did was to give ourselves island names. We found out Sea Dog had the best memory and could remember

names like: Jelly Fishy, Barnacle Head Boy, Horseshoe, Eeler, Squidy, Seaweed Peter, Sea star, Seahorse, Seagully, Muscleman, Starboard, Lobsta, Clammy, Cucumber, Patstar, Neon, Minka, Jellyfish, Hightide, Periwinkle, Skippa, and Keepa!

I am glad we got to know Mrs. Jones, the lighthouse keepa. She made our visit full of surprises and fun. She shared with us the history of the lighthouse and great stories about some of the keepas before her. Our last day on Burnt Island, Mrs. Jones told us about ghosts on the island, but we didn't meet any of them. This is the first lighthouse I have ever been in. I never knew a light could be so bright or that a foghorn could be so annoying. I really had a great time on the island! I am very glad the Department of Marine Resources has provided this wonderful opportunity for children like me.

Friday was our last day to be in this very special place. As *Ms. Boothbay* headed back to the mainland, the last thing I remember seeing was that beautiful white lighthouse setting high up on the rocks, and the small clump of trees we built our shelter in, and the large rocks we climbed upon and searched for sea stars and periwinkles. I will always remember the learning and fun I had on Burnt Island, my fifth grade friends, and our great teacher Mrs. O'Brien.



**Andrea Brooks, a fifth grade student at the Weatherbee School in Hampden, speaks at the Dedication Ceremony.**

*"The three days on the island were filled with learning, and we didn't even use books!"*

Andrea Brooks



**Finding sea stars in the intertidal zone.**



## The Burnt Island Living Lighthouse Program

The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) acquired the Burnt Island Light Station in 1998 as part of the Maine Lights Program. Education Director Elaine Jones, her assistant Jean McKay, local contractors, and hundreds of volunteers transformed it into an educational and recreational facility for the people of Maine and the nation. The buildings have been restored and redecorated to circa 1950, while nature trails established along the rocky shore appeal to the outdoor enthusiast.

An educational curriculum was developed around topics relating to Maine's maritime heritage, coastal environment, marine fisheries and the conservation of its resources. During the spring and fall, the five-acre island serves as an exceptional outdoor school for students and teachers from around our state. School children discover the varied life found in and around the rocky shore, sand beach, meadow, and maritime forest as they explore the island and participate in experiential learning. Local elementary schools have participated in day trips to the island, while children from the middle school level have spent up to three days and two nights tenting out.

On June 30, 2003, the enchanting Burnt Island and its historic buildings opened a new educational program called the *Burnt Island Living Lighthouse*. The light station's beautifully restored buildings serve as a "living" history museum where interpreters in period clothing portray a lighthouse family who once called Burnt Island home. A natural history walk around the perimeter trail follows the "living" history component, where interpreters point out the flora and fauna indigenous to Maine's coast, as well as the



geological features of this picturesque island. Visitors also learn about Maine's marine resources, the methods used to harvest them, and the measures used to conserve them. During the final segment of the three-hour tour, visitors climb the winding stairs into the lantern-room; view the historic photographs and documents in the covered walkway museum, sport fish off the rocks, or picnic by the waterfront.

This interpretive tour helps to preserve and promote Maine's cultural heritage, as well as to provide enrichment and opportunity for its citizens and its visitors.

### Community Improvement Award

The Burnt Island Lighthouse project received this award on October 15, 2003 from the Chamber of Commerce.

## The Muise Family Returns Home



**The children of Keeper Joseph Muise return to Burnt Island in 1999. Willard Muise and his three sisters Adele Bailey, Prudence Bagdikian, and Ann Muise.**



*"Portraying my family at the Burnt Island Lighthouse makes my buttons pop."*

Adele Bailey

Prior to developing the living history component for the *Burnt Island Living Lighthouse* program, Elaine Jones conducted extensive research in order to locate former keepers and the families of those deceased. When choosing which to portray, the family of Joseph Muise fit the bill because he had been the keeper of the light from 1936-1951, serving under both the U.S. Lighthouse Service and the United States Coast Guard.

On June 4, 1999, the children of Keeper Joseph Muise returned home to provide an oral history upon which the interpretive program is based. It had been almost 50 years since they had been on the island and the place had surely changed, but their memories were as strong as ever. They shared their adventures, feelings, frustrations, and sorrows while living at five different island stations along the coast of Maine.

Their assistance didn't end that day, as they were instrumental in guiding the restoration of Burnt Island's buildings by providing information, photographs, and old furnishings for the dwelling. Daughter Adele Bailey expressed with pride, "Portraying my family at the Burnt Island Lighthouse makes my buttons pop." The memory of Joseph Muise lives on at the Burnt Island Lighthouse despite his humble beginning as an orphan on the streets of Southwest Harbor.

## The Burnt Island Living Lighthouse Staff

It was a step back in time for all who visited Burnt Island this past summer, with a highly competent staff portraying Keeper Joseph Muise and his family. Dressed in period clothing, they made guests believe that it was 1950 while sharing their life experiences at the Burnt Island Light Station. The staff received positive comments and compliments daily from visitors, with many expressing that it was better than any educational program they had ever experienced.

Jim Buotte, the gentleman in uniform, wowed the crowd not only by his stately appearance, but also by his knowledge. As a true former keeper of the Burnt Island Light (1955-58), there wasn't a question that he couldn't answer.

The position of wife Annie was played by Jean McKay, with Elaine Jones serving as back-up. Jean is a former teacher who moved to Boothbay to retire, or so that was her plan until she made the phone call offering to help. Since then, Jean has assisted Elaine Jones with every facet, from the restoration of the buildings to the development of the educational components.



**Volunteer Susan Welch teaches about Maine's fisheries and the measures used to conserve them.**

The young adults who portrayed the children were all residents of Maine, three were local girls and the other two were from Hampden. Michael Wood, a sophomore at Bowdoin College, played the role of Willard,

the keeper's son. He entertained visitors at the boathouse where he explained the method of accessing the island using a peapod. He shared his feelings about growing up on five island stations, and drew visitors into song with his favorite sea shanty.

Chloe Joule, a junior at Boothbay Region High School, played the role of Adele, the keeper's

daughter. Her station was in the house with mama, where she toured visitors through the living quarters while relaying stories about their daily activities. Katie Brydon, a sophomore majoring in theatre at Emerson College was Prudy, while the role of younger sister Ann was shared by Alison Rittershaus and Bailey Irving. These girls captured their audience through a dialogue, while standing under the apple tree behind the oil house.

When the living history component was completed, the children all became naturalists. As interpreters, they led small groups around the perimeter trail, pointing out the flora and fauna indigenous to the island. They also identified nearby landmarks and shared local lore.

Volunteer Susan Welch and others offered a fisheries presentation while guests waited their turn to climb into the lantern room or visit the covered walkway museum. A rod loaner program was also available with many young families trying their luck at sport fishing.

Many thanks to the wonderful staff who provided visitors with an exceptional educational and cultural experience.



**Former Keeper Jim Buotte (1955-1958) returns to Burnt Island to portray Joseph Muise in the living history program.**



**Jean McKay, as wife Annie Muise, washes the clothes.**



**Irene Buotte operates the gift shop and keeps the books.**



## “Keepers” of the Burnt Island Lighthouse

A special thanks to the following individuals who volunteered time or became “Keepers” of the Burnt Island Lighthouse through their 2003 tax-deductible donation.

### Commissioner

Susan Clough  
Mrs. Marylouise Cowan  
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan St. Mary  
Susan Welch

### Inspector

Nanci Atwell  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Dennett  
Barbara M. Gagne  
Richard Manix  
Dugald C. McLeod, Jr.  
U.S. Lighthouse Society  
Patricia West  
Mr. & Mrs. John Williamson

### Keeper

Linda Miller Bain  
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Brooks  
John E. Davison  
Mr. & Mrs. John Granelli  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Katzev

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Mundy  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Norton  
Sandra Perkins  
David Stanford  
Southport School

### Assistant Keeper

Mr. & Mrs. Earl Bracker  
Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Dykes  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard King  
Mr. & Mrs. Damon Maher  
Louise B. Rogers  
Nan Seeman  
Mr. & Mrs. John Tower  
Weatherbee Fifth Grade  
Mr. & Mrs. William Welsh

### Relief Keeper

Marcia Annenberg  
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Breslav  
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Burgess  
Sue Bushwell  
Jill Christensen  
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Cornish  
Mr. & Mrs. James Gibson  
Girl Scout Troop 1659  
Sherry E. Grosky  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Hughes  
Nancy R. Kaynor

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Kelly  
Mr. & Mrs. John McGuire  
Mr. & Mrs. William Murphy  
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Perrow  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Schless  
Agnes Schupper  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Stracco  
Lillian D. Schwager  
Maude Wright

### Volunteered time

Americorps  
Irene Buotte  
Linda Farrell  
Susi Hamblen  
Sam & Maureen Harris  
Jeremy Jones  
Jerry Litzerman  
Hal Marden  
Bob McKay  
Basil McCullough  
Kirk McCullough  
Steve & Nancy McCullough  
Diantha Robinson  
Jane Roundy  
Stephanie Stephenson  
Susan Welch  
Bruce Wood



**A Labor of Love**  
for Kirk, Steve, and Nancy  
McCullough who donated  
countless hours to restore  
their old home.



## Memorial Gifts

When Willard and Gertrude Muise passed away, their daughters Linda and Barbara directed donations in their memory to Burnt Island. The money was used to purchase a refurbished Queen Atlantic cook stove, an exact replica of the one that was once there. The Muises had many fond memories of the stove; the hours spent huddled around it, and the wonderful meals that mama prepared on it.

Summer resident, Paul Gagne enjoyed visiting Burnt Island with his family and friends. When he passed away in 2001, his wife Bunny requested that donations be sent to Burnt Island in his memory. The generosity of his family and friends funded the creation of a museum in the covered walkway, a passage that connects the keeper's dwelling with the lighthouse.

The happiest years of Elizabeth “Betty” McCullough's life were spent on Burnt Island as the wife of Keeper James McCullough. When she passed away in 2002, donations in her memory were used to purchase furnishings for the kitchen.

Helen Moser Silberzahn followed the daily progress on Burnt Island through updates from her daughter, Jean McKay. When she passed away on Sept. 1, 2003, donations sent in her memory will be used for learning stations in the wildlife area.

## Former Keepers Attend Ceremony

Of the fourteen living Burnt Island keepers, six attended the Dedication Ceremony in June. Pictured in the photograph are from left to right: John Appleby (1977-79) of Lubec, Maine; Randall Griffing (1974-1977) of St. Albans, Vermont; Thomas Norton (1968-1971) of Key Largo, Florida; Dana Hale (1962-1963) of Eliott, Maine; James Buotte (1955-1958) of Viera, Florida; and Jerry Marlowe (1973-1974) of Concord, North Carolina.



## Why Does Burnt Island Need An Education Center?



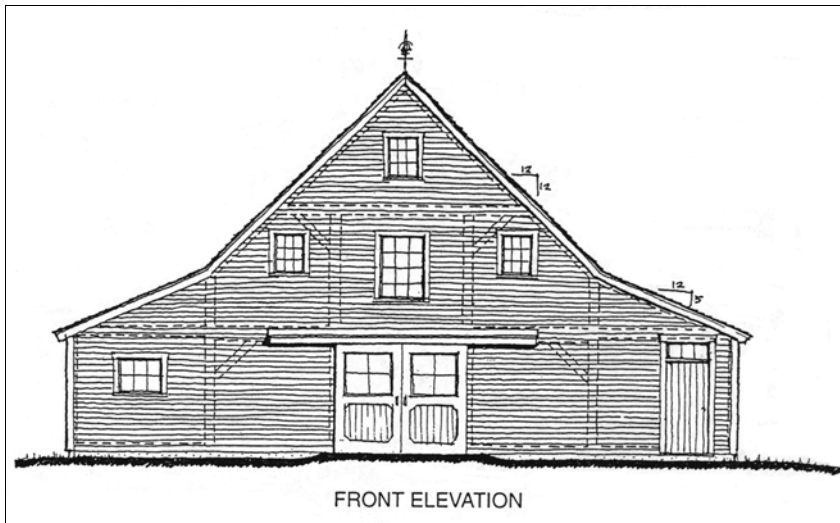
On a rainy day, classes, cooking, and meal time takes place under the shelter of blue tarps. An Education Center will provide students with a warm, dry classroom, dining area., and sleeping space.



In an attempt to warm up on a cold, wet day, students from Benton Elementary School learn a lesson in survival. A black trash bag really does retain body heat.



## What Will The Education Center Look Like?



In order to keep with a nautical theme, the Education Center will be built in the form of a Life Saving Station. The center portion of the first floor will be a classroom and kitchen, while one shed will be the public rest rooms and the other storage.

The loft will serve as the sleeping quarters where bunk beds will resemble the berths in a ship. These accommodations will provide program participants with appropriate shelter, as well as eliminate time spent setting up and tearing down tent sites.

Boothbay Harbor is at the end of one of Maine's peninsulas, making a day trip impractical for most schools. An Education Center will permit students from as far away as Aroostook County to participate in Burnt Island's unique educational program.

## Funding Sources for the Education Center

The building of an Education Center will have a major impact on the quality of education provided by the Department of Marine Resources. The MBNA Foundation has generously offered a \$150,000 Challenge Grant towards this facility. Many requests for matching funds have been submitted to foundations with pledges thus far being made by the Stephen & Tabitha King Foundation, the Davis Foundation, and the United States Lighthouse Society. In addition, many other contributions have been made by individuals raising the total pledged to about \$92,000.

If you are aware of any foundations, corporations, or individuals who might be willing to join this partnership of philanthropists, please convey this information to Elaine Jones at (207) 633-9580 or (207) 592-1839, or through e-mail ([elaine.jones@maine.gov](mailto:elaine.jones@maine.gov)).

During the construction phase, donations of building materials would be welcome, as well as volunteer labor to complete the project. Please be a part of this initiative by filling out and sending in the donation form on the following page.

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF  
MARINE RESOURCES



Department of Marine Resources  
Education Division  
Post Office Box 8  
W. Boothbay Hbr., ME 04575  
Phone: (207) 633-9580  
Fax: (207) 633-9579  
Email: elaine.jones@maine.gov

WE'RE ON THE WEB  
[www.maine.gov/dmr](http://www.maine.gov/dmr)

## Barn Raising—Please HELP!

Continued from page 1

On that date, it will match all pledges made towards the Education Center. If you would be so generous as to donate any amount of money, it would generate a dollar-for-dollar match from MBNA, as well as permanently affiliate you with the DMR's locus of learning.

To date, we have raised almost \$92,000 towards the construction of the Education Center. The Burnt Island project is unable to be funded by the agency's General Fund; therefore, it must rely upon outside funding and volunteer assistance. If you would contribute towards this worthwhile project, it would generate an equal match from MBNA, and bring us that much closer to our goal of \$150,000.

Your gift will be a tax deductible donation, and the DMR will send you an official letter listing the federal ID number.

We are also recruiting volunteer help in order to assist in the actual construction of the barn. If you are able to donate a day or two,

### Education Center Donation Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Enclosed you will find my tax deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I will donate \_\_\_\_\_ hours of time towards the construction of the Education Center. The "in-kind" value of my labor should be calculated as \_\_\_\_\_ skilled or \_\_\_\_\_ unskilled.

Please make your check to the Burnt Island Education Center, and mail to Elaine Jones, Dept of Marine Resources, PO Box 8, W. Boothbay Hbr., ME 04575.

your time will be considered as "in-kind" match. The actual building schedule will be determined after the "challenge" has been met.

Please complete the above form and return it with your donation today. Every dollar and every volunteer hour counts! **Thanks for your help.**

Receive a complimentary Burnt Island mug  
with a gift of \$100 or more.